

Message Text

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ACTION EB-11

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRN, CA

SUBJECT: CIVAIR: FUEL SHORTAGES -- INTERNATIONAL AVIATION

REF: (A) STATE 221740; (B) OTTAWA 2714

1. TCO THIS MORNING REVIEWED FUEL SITUATION WITH SENIOR AVIATION AND TRANSPORT OFFICIALS IN LIGHT NOV 15 DISCUSSION WITH NEB (REF B). ISSUE ALSO CAME UP IN QUESTION PERIOD IN PARLIAMENT NOV 16.

2. OFFICIALS DO NOT SEE ANY IMMEDIATE REAL SUPPLY PROBLEM. THEY CONFIRM THAT SITUATION IS TIGHT, PARTICULARLY AT MONTREAL. BUT EVEN THERE THEY DO NOT UNDERSTAND WHY AIR FRANCE FOUND IT NECESSARY ELIMINATE STOPS FOR FUEL SHORTAGE REASONS. (PARIS 29228, PARA 1). UNLIKE NEB SOURCE, THEY CONSIDERED TORONTO SUPPLY FAIRLY GOOD. REPORTED POLICY EVOLVING TO ENCOURAGE DOMESTIC FLIGHTS TAKE ON AS MUCH FUEL AS POSSIBLE AT TORONTO AND POINTS WEST. HOWEVER, THIS INCREASE IN DEMAND PRODUCING LOCALIZE SHORTAGES AT PLACES SUCH AS WINNIPEG.

3. IN RESPONSE TO QUESTION ABOUT CANADIAN CARRIERS' DIFFICULTIES OBTAINING FUEL, TRANSPORT MINISTER MARCHAND INDICATED TO PARLIAMENT CARRIERS HAVE ADEQUATE SUPPLY
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IN CANADA BUT ARE EXPERIENCING SOME DIFFICULTIES IN

US BECAUSE OF "RATIONING" THERE. FURTHER QUESTION AS TO WHETHER US CARRIERS WERE "TOPPING UP" WITH FUEL IN CANADA BROUGHT RESPONSE THAT US "RATIONING" WAS ENCOURAGING THIS BUT GOC AT PRESENT COULD NOT RESTRICT US CARRIERS ALONE. MARCHAND SUGGESTED CANADA MAY YET HAVE TO ADOPT A SYSTEM SIMILAR TO US.

4. TRANSPORT OFFICIALS' WORK RELATES TO LONGER TERM IMPLICATIONS OF PROBLEM AND IS BASED ON ASSUMPTION OF 10 PERCENT CUT CANADIAN OIL SUPPLY FROM ARAB ACTIONS AND CONTINUED 7 PERCENT GROWTH RATE IN DEMAND. THIS WOULD PRODUCE A MORE SERIOUS PINCH THAN AT PRESENT. HOWEVER, THERE IS ESTIMATED 59-DAY RESERVE SUPPLY OF AVIATION FUEL IN CANADA WHICH WOULD EASE IMMEDIATE DIFFICULTY IF ARAB ACTIONS WERE AT WORST.

5. IN LAST TWO WEEKS, GOC HAS INSPIRED AIR TRANSPORT ASSOCIATION OF CANADA (ATAC) TO DEVELOP INDUSTRY CONTINGENCY PLAN. SINCE NO SUCH PLAN HAS HISTORICALLY BEEN IN EXISTENCE, NOT EVEN SUCH ELEMENTARY DATA AS GROSS AMOUNTS CONSUMED AT VARIOUS AIRPORTS ARE AVAILABLE IN CENTRALIZED RECORDS. HOPEFULLY, THIS WILL BE CORRECTED SHORTLY.

6. ONLY OPERATIONAL PROBLEM BROUGHT TO OUR ATTENTION, IN ADDITION TO THOSE CITED REFTTEL, IS THAT AIR CANADA HAVING SOME DIFFICULTIES OBTAINING FUEL AT CHICAGO (O'HARE) AND IS CONSEQUENTLY TAKING ON EXTRA FUEL FOR RETURN FLIGHTS.

7. ATAC OFFICIAL THIS AFTERNOON ADVISED THAT FUEL COMMITTEE AT SUCH A RUDIMENTARY STAGE OR WORK IT HAS NO CLEAR VIEW OF OVERALL PRESENT SITUATION AND CATALOG OF PROBLEMS BEING ENCOUNTERED BY INDIVIDUAL CARRIERS. HE REQUESTED EMBASSY PROVIDE ATAC WITH INFO RE DEVELOPMENTS IN US WHICH MIGHT AFFECT CARRIERS HERE.
SCHMIDT

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